

# **Wound VAC**

## ***Office of the Medical Director Coverage Decision***

### **Coverage Decision**

The department does cover VAC as an adjunct to standard treatment in carefully selected patients who have failed all other forms of treatment.

### **Background**

The Vacuum Assisted Closure (VAC) device is used to facilitate wound healing by converting an open wound to a closed wound. VAC consists of an evacuation tube embedded in a polyurethane foam dressing. After the foam dressing is placed in the wound bed and sealed by an occlusive dressing, the tube is attached to a vacuum unit. The application of negative pressure causes the foam to collapse resulting in removal of excess fluids; increased blood flow and decreased bacterial colonization; granulation tissue formation; and wound closure.

### **Indications of Use**

Patients who may benefit from VAC may include those with:

- Chronic Stage III or IV pressure ulcers,
- Neuropathic ulcers,
- Venous or arterial insufficiency ulcers,
- Chronic ulcers of mixed etiology present for at least 30 days,
- Dehiscent wounds or wounds with exposed orthopedic hardware or bone,
- Acute wounds, or
- Poststernotomy mediastinitis.

### **Contraindications**

Exclusion from coverage will result if one of the following is present:

- Necrotic tissue with eschar in the wound, if debridement is not attempted,
- Untreated osteomyelitis within the vicinity of the wound,
- Cancer in the wound, or
- A fistula to an organ or body cavity within the vicinity of the wound.

### **Duration of Use**

Treatment may be terminated when:

- The physician judges that adequate wound healing has occurred, or
- Documentation shows that measurable degree of wound healing has failed to occur over the prior month, or
- Four months has elapsed. Coverage beyond the 4-month period may be considered on an individual basis and after receipt of additional documentation.